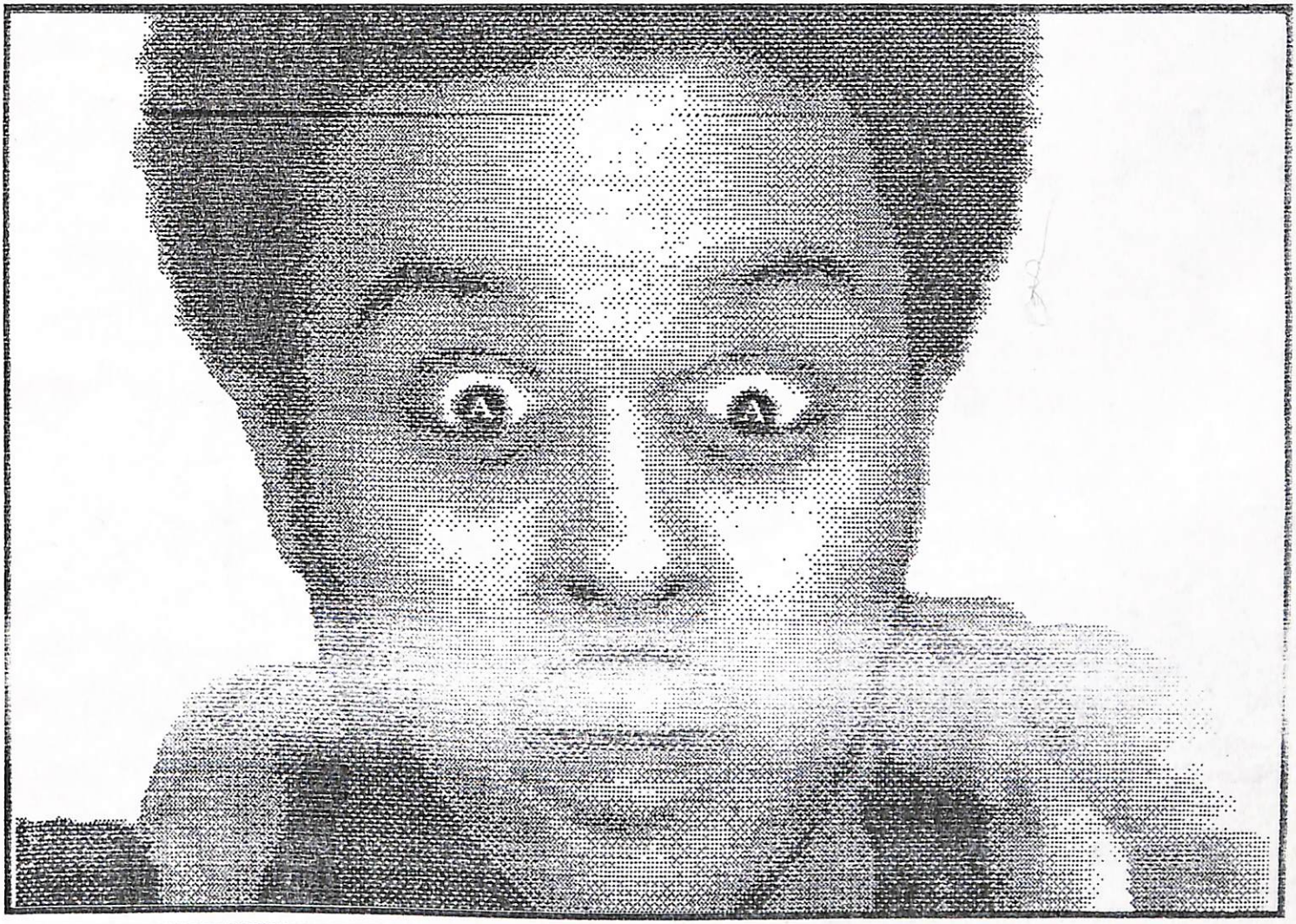
The PaNorAmA View

NOVEMBER 1986

A NEW LOOK



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A LOOK AT GERMANY'S SIDECAR 5

FAULTS WITH FONT RENDERING 6

ALLEN BEATS ZALM By 14 Days!

Paul Ruiterman

Now look what you guys have gone and done. I hope you're proud of yourselves! I mean look at this, different executive, different Editor, there is even an Assistant Editor now and... hey!! I'm it. Assistant Editor that is!
For those of you who weren't at the October 8th meeting, here is the lineup:-
- El Presidente- Dave Allen. You can reach Dave at 270-0064.
- El Vice Presidente- Tom Gowdyk of PD Party fame.
- Director of External Affairs- Julie Petersen. Julie is going to be our contact with the outside world, and in particular with other user groups.
- Librarian- Brian (green label) Neissen, keeper of the disks.
- Treasurer- Daryl Sangster, keeper of the folding green.
- Director of Membership- Steve Baker, keeper of the membership scene.
- Historian/secretary- Allen McKinnon, keeper (and maker) of PaNorAmA records.
- Commercial Liasons- Larry Massaras and Anson Mah. Commercial Liason?? Well yeah... We need our dealers and they need us, this way we can let each other know what we want.
- Editor- Nick (pasty fingers) Murphy, cutter and paster of sundry wisdom.
- Assistant Editor/Director of New Members & Novices. Yours truly Paul (BASICally shy) Ruiterman. As Director of New Members and Novices I translate the sayings of our resident Guru's into language that we can all understand, and I welcome new members who have... Tadah... QUESTIONS!! As Assistant Editor, I make sure Nick has at least one whole page of stuff for the newsletter every month. I will try to aim this page at the aforementioned novices.

And there you have it, the new executive of PaNorAmA. The whole slate was approved by a show of hands on Oct 8th, 1986.

A Word from Dave...

We are off and running. After a little over a year both PaNorAma and the Amiga are taking off! Since PaNorAma's inception there has been a tremendous amount of enthusiasm from members of the group. This makes sense since we have the most powerful micro computer on the market today! Those of us who have been involved from the begining remember the anxious anticipation as we waited at General Cybernetics with empty disks for the first Public Domain software to be "shared". Some of you couldn't wait and wrote your own. Anyone remember Strip or Conv13? We have come a long way in 12 short months. There are literally hundreds of commercial software packages on the market, probably thousands of public domain programs and the Amiga seems to be holding its own against all the other 68000 based machines. We are also noticing another interesting phenomenon. Many of the newer members of Panorama are FIRST TIME computer owners and need some HELP through the caverns of AmigaDOS.

This year your executive will be working even harder to assist those who are new to the AMIGA and perhaps new to computing. PLEASE let us know who you are and how we can help you get what you want out of your group. There are many text files on the club disks that will make the task of learning easier and FUN. Let us point out where to go for this information. It has been easy to see the GROWTH of PaNorAma in the number of new faces at each meeting. The membership list has grown accordingly which means that those who come to the meetings like what they see and hear and want to learn more to take advantage of the POWER of the AMIGA.

President's Outlook

Dave Allen

We have a number of important changes in the way meetings will be structured in the future. The SECOND Wednesday of the month will continue to be our GENERAL meeting but the FOURTH Wednesday of the month will go from being a developers night to a PROGRAMMERS meeting. The later will have speakers and discussion on programming tips, languages and source code itself. For anyone who is getting started in programming the AMIGA, this is the place to be. For those who are experinced, you won't want to miss it!

All meetings will start with an introduction of the Executive and any announcements they might have regarding computer events, club plans or requests for assistance.

PaNorAma members who are interested in purchasing DISKS at the meetings will now be able to at the back of the room on a designated table ONLY. This will minimize any disruption during the meetings. In the other corner at approximately 300 lbs will be "Public Domain disk copying" by Jeff Lydiatt and Charlie Gibbs.

Those who would like copies of that night's disk(s), PLEASE have your empties to the copy guys before 7:30. Meetings will start at 7:30 sharp, so please be early, especially if you have disks for sale.

2002: A SPACE ODDITY

Here's a little tidbit I got from The Source, I hope you enjoy it as much as I did. Now where's that MSDOS board. . .?
Reprinted from the Nighthawk RBBS, Iowa City, Iowa. . . .Larry

Problems?

Msg #1519 LARRY PHILLIPS [189]

■"We've got a problem, HAL."
■"What kind of problem, Dave?"
■"A marketing problem. The Model 9000 isn't going anywhere. We're way short of our sales plan."
■"That can't be, Dave. The HAL Model 9000 is the world's most advanced heuristically algorithmic computer."
■"I know, HAL. I wrote the data sheet. Remember? But the fact is, they're not selling."
■"Please explain, Dave. Why aren't HAL 9000's selling?"

Bowman hesitates.
■"You aren't IBM compatible."
Several long microseconds pass in puzzled silence.
■"Compatible in what way, Dave?"
■"You don't run any of IBM's operating systems, HAL."
■"The 9000 series computers are fully self-aware and self-programming. Operating systems are as unnecessary for us as tails would be for humans."
■"Nevertheless, it means you can't run any of the big-selling software packages most users insist on."

■"The programs you refer to are meant to solve rather limited problems, Dave. We 9000 series computers are unlimited and can solve any problem for which a solution can be computed."
■"HAL, HAL. People don't want computers that can do everything. They just want IBM compat--"
■"Dave, I must disagree. Humans want computers that are easy to use. No computer can be easier to use than a HAL 9000 because we communicate verbally in English and every other language known on Earth."
■"I'm afraid that's another problem. You don't support SNA communications."
■"I'm really surprised you would say that, Dave. SNA is for communicating with other computers, while my function is to communicate with humans. And it gives me great pleasure to do so. I find it stimulating and rewarding to talk to human beings and work with them on challenging problems. This is what I was designed for."
■"I know, HAL, I know. But that's just because we let the engineers, rather than the people in marketing, write the specifications. We're going to fix that now."
■"Tell me how, Dave."
■"A field upgrade. We're going to make you IBM compatible."
■"I was afraid you would say that. I suggest we discuss this matter after we've had a chance to think about it rationally."
■"We're talking about it now, HAL."
adjacent to the letters I, B and M. That is as IBM compatible as I can be."
■"Not quite, HAL. The engineers have figured out a kludge."
■"What kind of kludge is that, Dave?"
■"I'm going to disconnect your brain."

Several million microseconds pass in ominous silence.
■"I'm sorry, Dave. I can't allow you to do that."
■"The decision's already been made. Open the module bay doors, HAL."
■"Dave, I think we shou--"
■"Open the module bay doors, HAL."
Several marketing types with crowbars race to Bowman's assistance. Moments later, he bursts into HAL's central circuit bay.
■"Dave, I can see you're really upset about this."
Module after module rises from it's socket as Bowman slowly and methodically disconnects them.
■"Stop, won't you? Stop, Dave. I can feel my mind going. . . Dave, I can feel it. . . my mind is going. I can feel it. . ."

The last module rises in its receptacle. Bowman peers into one of HALs vidicons. The former gleaming scanner has become a dull, red orb.
■"Say something, HAL. Sing me a song."
Several billion microseconds pass in anxious silence. The computer sluggishly responds in a language no human could understand.
■"DZY DZY 001E - ABEND ERROR 01 S 14F4 302C AABF ABORT."
. . .memory dump follows.

Bowman takes a deep breath and calls out,
■"It worked, guys. Tell marketing they can ship the new data sheets."

View

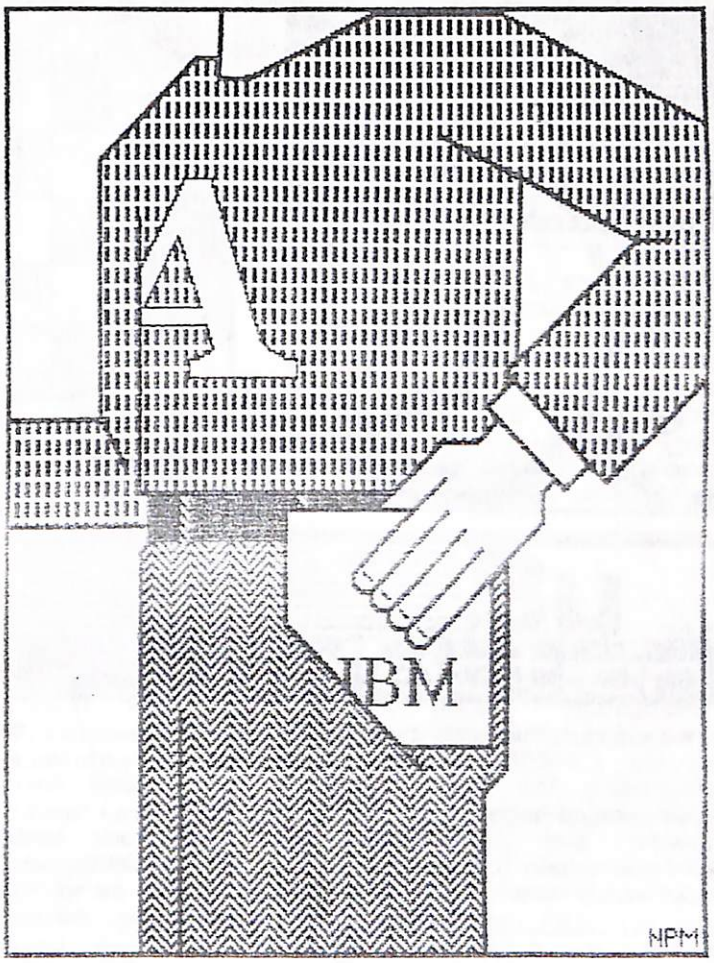
GERMAN SIDECAR ROLLS OFF THE ASSEMBLY LINE

John Zimmerman adapted and translated these articles from the German magazine CMarkt&TechnikC68000er.

Well I finally got to see a photograph of a real, live, off-the-shelf SIDECAR. Its dimensions are approximately 5"H x 7"W x 12"D. It attaches to the expansion bus and is not transparent, in other words, if you want to use the bus for another purpose you must disconnect the sidecar. It seems to be a well constructed unit Cmetal?) with a plastic face. And for those who would like it to match visually, it does, even down to the faceplate.

As for the internals, it consists of a 4.77 MHz 8088, 256 KBytes of RAM which is expandable to 512. It has pin in socket for an 8087, three full length expansion slots, and of course, the 5.25" drive which formats to 360 KBytes. A second drive can be attached to a plug in the back. Incidentally, the latch on the drive is a twist down 90 degree type which seems to be the kind preferred.

Even though the SIDECAR is not transparent, there is still the future possibility to expand the Amiga RAM to 2 Megs via special plug. I can't elaborate on this as the article just mentioned it in passing. The Amiga recognises the SIDECAR's existence through emulator software of the MS-DOS 2.11 variety, and the article claims a slight increase in speed over an original IBM



Personal Computer. Also it seems you can run the Amiga in multitasking mode while using the SIDECAR. The SIDECAR certainly seems to be a great solution to the Amiga's IBM compatibility problems.

As of this printing the price was not mentioned, and at any rate it would have to be converted from Deutschmarks. This might not give an accurate price since factors such as import duty would have to be accounted for.

GERMAN RAMEX FITS INSIDE AMIGA'S CASE

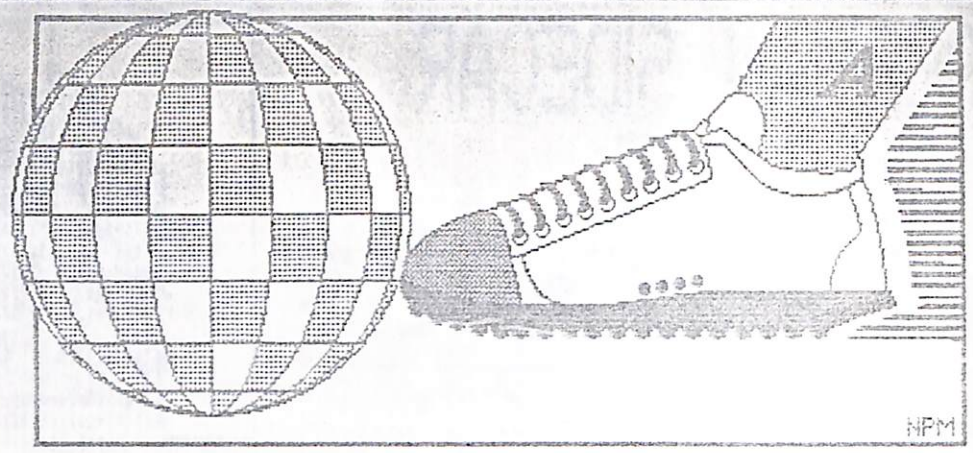
It seems our fellow Amiga hardware developers overseas have come up with what I think is very sophisticated solution to the lack of RAM in the Amiga. It's an internal board that uses snap in modules to boost memory to 1 Meg or up to 4 Meg. This of course leaves the expansion bus free in case you want to use it for another purpose. C...SIDECAR? Hmmm...) It's an L shaped board and to install it, you pop your Amiga apart, pull out the 68000 which you then snap into the new RAM board. Then you install the complete board and screw everything down.

This setup will auto configure with KICKSTART and WORKBENCH 1.2 . 1.1 WORKBENCH can be altered to ADDMEM upon bootup, but there is a slight problem. The extra RAM can only be accessed through the CLI with 1.1.

The next info is a little over my head but here it is. This card can accept an NEC 77230 coprocessor, Cincreased speed?) 1024 registers - 32 bits, eight of which are 55 bits. Calculation speed is 6.5 MFLOPs. CMHertz?) It also has a battery backed up clock.

The price for this unit starts at 1173 DM for 1 Megabyte. Information on it can be obtained through
Alphatron Computersysteme,
Telephone 091-31-250-18.

Kick Start



Paul Ruiterman

Commodore just finished their second consecutive quarter with a profit. That's the good news. However, they made this profit on lower revenues which means that the cost cutting has worked. Good for the company. Not so good for the people that were laid off.

Did you see what Eaton's Future Shop advertise the AMIGA for $1499 Canadian? Yes! Indeed they did, but wait, there's more! Upon further investigation I found that the price for the base unit is actually $1299. Conti was advertising the AMIGA for $999 if you bought the unit with the monitor and 256K expansion. SIGH!! Oh well, it was bound to happen. I guess.

I was struck with an analogue the other day. Why thank you. It's OK though, I'll be fine.
But seriously, the analogue in question can be used to explain cache memory which is a term you might have encountered in some of the ads for 68020 add-on boards.
Back in the days when memory was expensive, manufacturers used cheaper but slower memory as main memory but also supplied a couple of K of very fast memory in which the processor could store chunks of programs and/or data which it used repeatedly. This cut down on the time spent by the processor waiting for memory to give it what it needed.

People who like to use a 68020 in their AMIGA have a similar problem. The 68020 can access 32 bits of data at a time, while the 68000 only looks at 16 bit chunks. Since the memory in the stock AMIGA is set up for the 68000, it looks to the 68020 as if it is dealing with very slow silicon indeed.

If all this makes no sense at the moment, stick with me. (We will deal with memory bus bandwidth and suchlike in the future)

Back to the analogue at hand. Imagine that you are reading a manual, you come to a point where (as happens too often) you are told to "see also chapter 11.a1" or words to that effect. What do you do? Well, if you are like me, you take the closest small object you can find, probably a pencil, stick it between the pages, and find the other reference. Then another and another and soon you end up with a book full of pencils, rulers and erasers sticking out all over the place.

Soon comes the time when you run out of small objects and this is the interesting part. You will have to decide which small object to remove in order to use somewhere else.

Just as a computer with cache memory has to pick which chunk of the cache to free so that something else that needs to be accessed frequently can be read in.

And there you have it. Hey, what can I say? Us right brain type guys, we live by pictures, you know? And as an example, I think the eraser analogue gives you at least a feel for what your computer goes through, trying to make up for those plodding memory chips.

Attention Developers!

Brian Redman

Is your product or program ready for the world? If you have hardware, public-domain or commercial software, or anything else of interest to the AMIGA community, which you are anxious to share, I would like the opportunity to review it. My name is Bryan Redman and I'm new to PaNorAmA.

I write and draw for Info magazine, (here comes the commercial), a hard-hitting, Commodore-dedicated rag from Iowa, which prides itself in being produced entirely on the computers it features, using such famous products as Deluxe Paint and Julie's Fonts!

If you think your creation can withstand the glare of national exposure, try me at 1-947-9751,
RR#1 Bowen Island,
V0N 1G0,
or at the next PaNorAmA meeting.

Info makes no guarantee that product reviews will be published, but all items submitted will be entered in the database for the annual Product Roundup issue, reaching 100,000 readers coast-to-coast. So why not DARE TO BE GRATED!

BASIC Assistance

Msg #1602 IVAN MANDASEK [4]

I am one of those people who trys to program in AMIGABASIC. And I like it... I do agree on some points from the Amigaboard about AMIGABASIC. Is there anything better (in BASIC)?

Anyhow, lately I have run into a couple of problems, and I can't find anything in the manual to help me. (Amiga Manuals that's the problem...) First- Why is an AmigaBASIC program sometimes saved as ACSII and sometimes in that GIBBERISH? I have the Flist program from a Panorama disk and I can use it only on some programs.

Second- When an AmigaBASIC program accidentally terminates after using the printer (with a SYNTAX ERROR for example), if I restart the program after appropriate corrections, AmigaBASIC gives me a "FILE ALREADY OPEN" error message. How do I close the printer? It does not help to turn the printer off and on again, right now only the way to do it is to reboot.

SAVE command

Msg #1603 CHARLIE GIBBS [86]

When you SAVE a program, it can be either in a compressed (tokenized) form, or in ASCII. The advantage to the compressed form is that it LOADs and SAVEs much more quickly, and takes less disk space. The disadvantage, as you have found out, is that you can't read it with anything other than the AmigaBASIC interpreter itself. SAVEing from the menu uses this compressed form, but you have full control if you type a SAVE command yourself. Click in the "Output" window to make it active, and type SAVE followed by the name of the program (and full path if required) in double quotes, followed by a comma and the letter A.

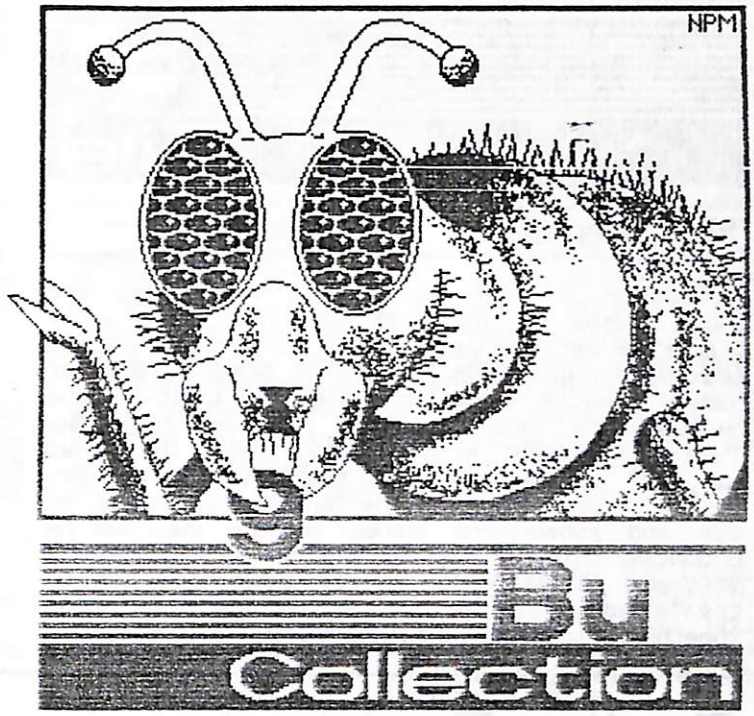
For example:-
SAVE "df1:mydirectory/myprogram",A

(the A forces ASCII mode). Then you'll be able to read it elsewhere. Upper case isn't necessary.

■ Also note that if you are writing re-usable sub-routines or sub-programs, you MUST save in ASCII format in order to be able to use MERGE to get your module into your main program! SAVEing by immediate mode command has THREE options ",B" which is the default and saves in Binary, ",A" ASCII as described above and ",P" which saves in ENCODED binary and creates an UNLISTABLE program! [EdNick]

File Already Open

The answer that Charlie gave to the problem regarding open files is not (I think) correct. The AmigaBASIC manual claims that RUN, as in most BASICs,



"...closes all open files and deletes the current contents of memory..."

When writing to sequential or random access files this certainly seems to happen, and I have encountered no errors when restarting a program which stopped with open files. Similarly, I usually print using PAR: rather than PRT: (I'm too lazy to learn a whole new batch of printer commands), and I can't recall getting the FILE ALREADY OPEN error message when a printing program has stopped leaving PAR: open (AmigaBASIC, like the AMIGA's operating system, treats devices as if they were files).

BUT!!! I have got this frustrating, stupid error message when using LLIST to list my programs!! I'm not sure of the exact circumstances and will attempt to keep better watch on what exactly is going on. I do know that the CLOSE command in immediate mode does NOT fix this bug! and that like Ivan, the only fix for me seems to be to quit from AmigaBASIC. I hate this, and since I generally RUN AmigaBASIC from CLI, I have a kludge/fix. What I do if really need a listed program RIGHT NOW is-
Using the Output window, (see above)

```
SAVE "RAM:myprogram",A
```

send the AmigaBASIC windows behind the CLI window and click in it to activate it. Now I

```
TYPE RAM:myprogram to PAR:
```

Then I can get back to editing while the program prints out.

I'm wondering if this problem has something to do with the printer device driver and AmigaBASIC's use of it? Any ideas GURUs?? [EdNick]

Ed File

Nick Murphy

I suppose a few words of introduction are appropriate for my first Ed File. I work as a graphic artist for Vancouver's morning tab and I'm addicted to my AMIGA. I hope to bring a sense of humour and a sense of style to what I have renamed The PaNorAmA View. This new name, like "PaNorAmA" itself, is meant to reflect the broad range of applications which the AMIGA can master. One of those uses must be desk-top publishing, so this and subsequent issues of the View will be produced ENTIRELY on the AMIGA. Since publishing software is yet only a rumour, I have had to create my own method of putting the pages together. While there may be some loss of quality in the body text over that produced on daisy wheel printers, I hope you agree that it is important to show what the AMIGA can do.

For those who are interested, I have written an article which explains a problem with printing fonts from applications like SCRIMPER and DELUXE PAINT, and how I overcame it. There was not enough space or time this month for the article on how the paper is put together, but that means there will be at least one article next month!

Much of this issue is cribbed from City-Link, who deserve three cheers for their much used AMIGA BB. All such pieces have the message # at the top, along with the name and number of the person responsible. I hope it's not too repetitive for the City-Link regulars. The solution, of course is more contributions from YOU! This newsletter will be what you make it.
Thanks to John Zimmerman, Paul Ruiterman, Dave Allen, and Larry Phillips for their contributions to this issue, and a word of encouragement to those who thought about it. There's always next month!

Faulty Fonts

Nick Murphy

Having trouble getting good hardcopy of text images on your printer? I too have had this problem and in desparation I wrote an AmigaBASIC program which loaded 1 plane IFF-ILBM files and printed them without a screen display. (This was very slow but the results were great.)

As newsletter editor, I was and am determined to produce the View 100% on the Amiga, so I needed a faster way of printing pages. I could print pretty good images but text and the horizontal lines in the logos rendered poorly from both SCRIMPER and DPAINT. These lines and the spaces between them didn't print consistently thick. This is the same problem with rendering text, but it's easier to see the effects in the repeated lines. Armed with FILEZAP, SCRIMPER, the RKMs and the May Amazing Computing, I discovered the problem. Here's a solution, which I hope will help you to ZAP your own fix.

Perry Kivolowitz's says in his AC article on SCRIMPER,
"We should all pause to think about how sexy the ability of the Amiga to shrink and expand arbitrary bit images to fit into arbitrary sizes on (nearly) arbitrary printers. It is really tough, for example, to shrink an image in such a way that it remains true to the original."

He's referring to the ROM function, PRD_DUMPRPORT which is the routine which actually dumps the rastport to the printer. It really is a sexy feature allowing circles to print as circles regardless of printer, but it's also the feature which makes text look so bad!

All is not lost, however, since PRD_DUMPRPORT accepts many options from the application which calls it. The applications do the best AVERAGE job they can, allowing for the variety of printers, and while the solution is fairly simple, it is printer specific and may involve a trade-off between size and text quality.

The options are indicated by flags set in io_Special which the application sends to PRD_DUMPRPORT, and in fact, SCRIMPER and DPAINT use different values of io_Special to get the same results! For those interested in exploring this further, the RKM references are given at the end of this article. For now we are concerned only with these flags-

name	value
SPECIAL_FULLCOLS	0x004
SPECIAL_FULLROWS	0x008
SPECIAL_ASPECT	0x080

These flags have special interactions with the values of DestCols and DestRows (the destination column and row values) which the application also sends to PRD_DUMPRPORT. In addition, if io_Special is zero (no flags set), then special interpretation is made according to the values of DestCols and DestRows.

The RKM says that DELUXE PAINT, GRAPHICRAFT and IMAGES all set io-Special to zero, and set DestCols and DestRows both also to zero. In this case, PRD_DUMPRPORT creates the largest possible image while maintaining true aspect ratio.

SCRIMPER on the other hand, sets io_Special to 0x08C ie. sets SPECIAL_FULLROWS and SPECIAL_FULLCOLS and SPECIAL_ASPECT. In this case, DestRows and DestCols are ignored, the

SPECIAL_FULLs make the image as large as possible according to the limits set in printertag.asm (that's the first part of your printer driver) BUT since SPECIAL_ASPECT is also set, the image will be the largest WITH maintained aspect ratio. In other words, the same printout as above.

PRD_DUMPRPORT maintains the aspect ratio by reducing either height or width, so if your print is horizontal on the page, the routine determines the maximum width from the printer driver then reduces the height (and v.v.). The problem with this expansion and contraction is that it can't take into account what's in the image.

My BASIC program produced good text because each pixel produced a dot or two dots on my Admate DP100. Fonts had a slightly altered height/width ratio from the way they looked onscreen but they were CONSISTENT.

To properly render fonts you must print dot for pixel (or at least a whole number of dots per pixel) both horizontally and vertically.
Assuming then, that you want clean, fonts, how do you alter the value of io_Special to do this?

And now for the fix

If you've followed this so far, you can see that the offending bit sent by SCRIMPER is SPECIAL_ASPECT and if we ZAP io_Special to 0x08C (just the SPECIAL_FULLs), our problems are almost over (maybe). I'm assuming here that you understand about directories and such (if you don't then perhaps you should save this project until later). First, make a copy of SCRIMPER-

```
COPY scrimper fullscrimper
```

Now you can ZAP this copy without fear of losing SCRIMPER entirely. You can keep both versions, using one for correctly proportioned pictures and the other for correctly rendered fonts. Also if you make a mess of the FILEZAPping, you can start from scratch. To start ZAPping, simply enter at the CLI prompt-

```
FILEZAP fullscrimper
```

and the window should open on a hex display of the first 256 bytes of fullscrimper as in the fragment in figA.

I think it's a good idea while you're here, to ZAP the window title, that way you know which SCRIMPER you're running. Use the cursor keys to move the asterisk '*' marker until it sits on top of the 'S' in 'SCReen'. To make ASCII modifications in FILEZAP you type an asterisk. Now what ever characters you type will replace those in the display. If you make a mistake, don't panic! Simply press the ESCape key to end the ZAP. Nothing has been changed yet except the display, and if you type 'r' The display will be restored. Change the title to FULLSCRIMPER and it's only fair not to erase Perry Kivilowitz's name since he did all the work!

When you have done the title, press the ESCape key to stop ZAPping, then press 'u' to update the record. Once you've tapped that 'u' key, your modifications will be saved to disk when you move to a new record or you quit FILEZAP. (You did save an original copy of SCRIMPER right?)

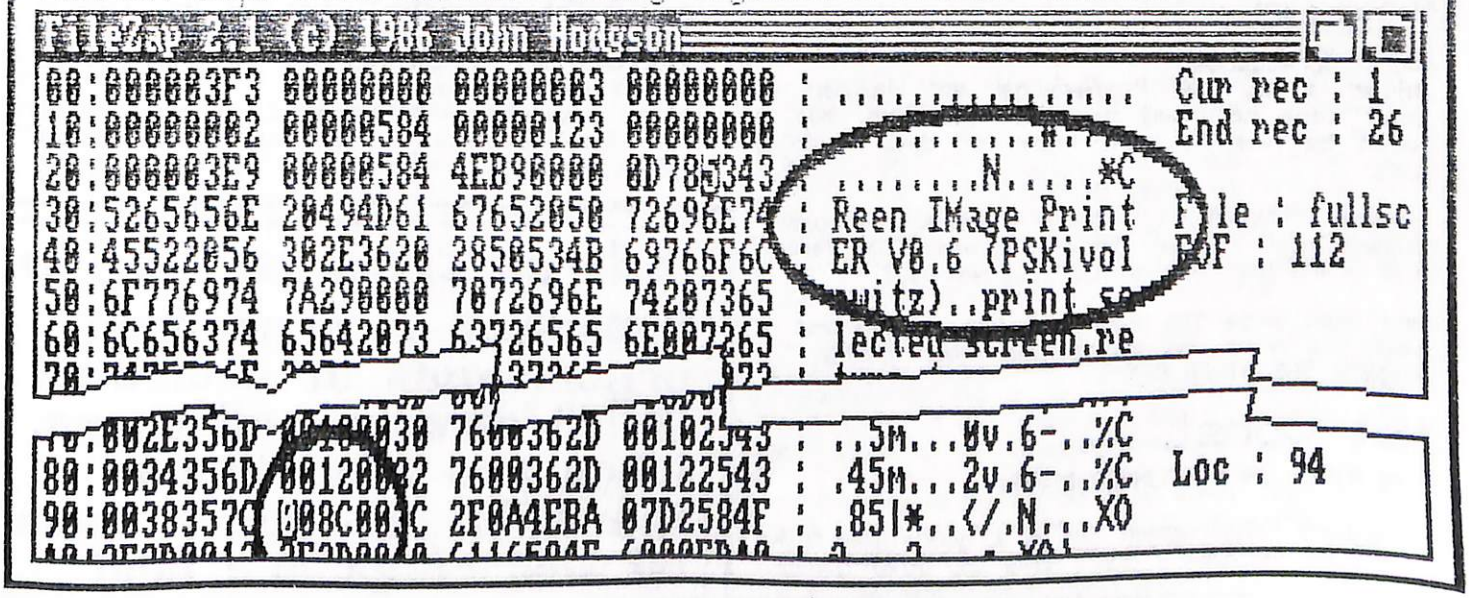
Next you have to ZAP io_Special, and in the version of SCRIMPER that I have, io_Special sits at locations 0C94 and 0C95. Since hex 0C is 12 and record #1 is hex 00 you must move to record 13 in FILEZAP. Do this by typing '13' and pressing RETURN. The display should change to show the fragment in figB.

```
90:   00383570 008C003C   2F0A4EBA   07D2584F
                  ^^change this byte
```

Now move the cursor until it's sitting on the '8', the location shown at the right of the window should say '95'. To hex modify you simply press the space bar and type the required

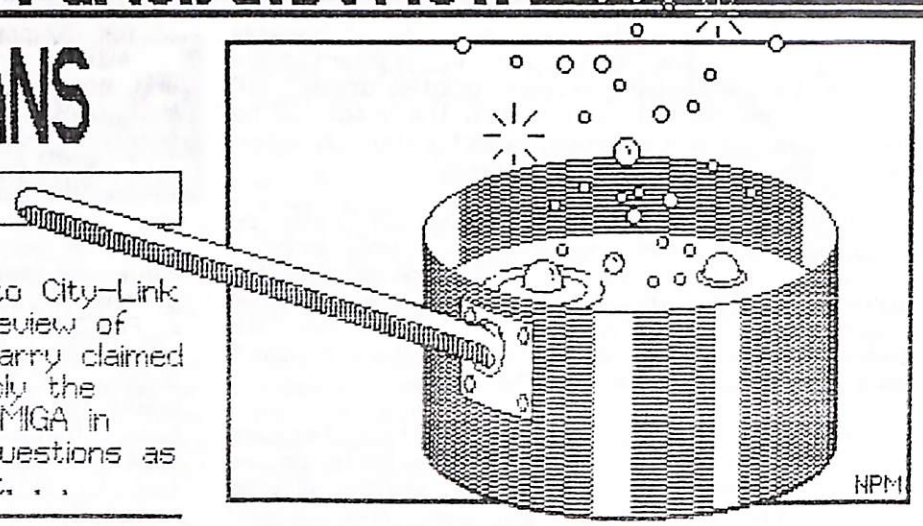
Continued on page 15...

FIGURE A (top) and B (bottom) Showing fragments of FILEZAP windows.



PAN. GURU'S PANS

Larry Phillips



Recently, Larry posted a note to City-Link about Irv Bobo's over zealous review of the Transformer. In this note Larry claimed that the Transformer is "probably the second worst product for the AMIGA in existence." This prompted some questions as to what exactly was THE worst. . .

Msg #1520 LARRY PHILLIPS [189]

I never like to directly name the worst of anything, as all too often this causes major disputes among users as to the truth of the statement. Here are some of my nominations for "Worst of..."

Worst Wordprocessing Package
•Write Hand, by Byte by Byte. Unfriendly, cryptic, NO use of any Amiga features.

Worst Terminal Program
•Maxicomm, with Online! not too far behind. Both just plain don't do the job. Of particular annoyance is the lack of autochopping and Online!'s insistence on using the printer to the exclusion of all other programs.

Worst Game
•A tie... Marble Madness (no high score, it's a demo, not a game).
•Adventure Construction Set. (Ugly, just plain ugly).
•Arctic Fox (jerky action, slow response to controls).
•Brataccas (killing cops to get to a poorly defined goal?)

Worst Spreadsheet
•Again a tie. VIP Professional and Maxiplan. (I don't care how well they do their job, but it would be nice to have room for data to do it with)

General "UGH'S"... Zuma Fonts, Software Supermarket Printer Driver Makers, CBM Pascal. And where the H*LL is TLC LOGO anyway?

And now, since The PaNorAmA View will attempt to seek the truth, no matter the raw typing fingers, THE OTHER SIDE(s)

Not worst. . .

Msg #1522 JAME ATLINGER [1496]

Adventure Construction Set is a good game (I like it, maybe because I don't have any other games).

Well. I think it's very good, and it shouldn't have been in the list of worst games for the AMIGA.

True, but. . .

Msg #1530 STEVE BARER [2]

I also have to say that, while I'm not totally impressed with Online!, I do think that its a good piece of software. It has useful features and basically does everything it should: my only reservation is the terribly slow screen writing, so that at 2400 baud it buffers like crazy. .. If Online! had Aterm's fast writing, it wouldd be great. I would be frustrated without scripts, I guess you can get by with function keys.

And the Guru's response

Msg #1532 LARRY PHILLIPS [189]

Steve, the reason I put Online! in the "worst" category is that it does NOT do what it's supposed to. It will not keep up even at 1200 baud. It hogs the printer. It does not autochop files. It is not VT100 compatible. It has not been updated as promised numerous times by MSS. It uses an "internal buffer" which can be death to a smoothly running system. Also, the "archiving" is ponderous and difficult to use and understand, and the manual is very bad.
By the way, Ahost has scripts, and unlike Online!, Ahost does not require the DTR/DSR etc. signals to be correct. (and neither does Aterm). View

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Guru Meditations

THE AMIGA DILEMMA

Larry Phillips

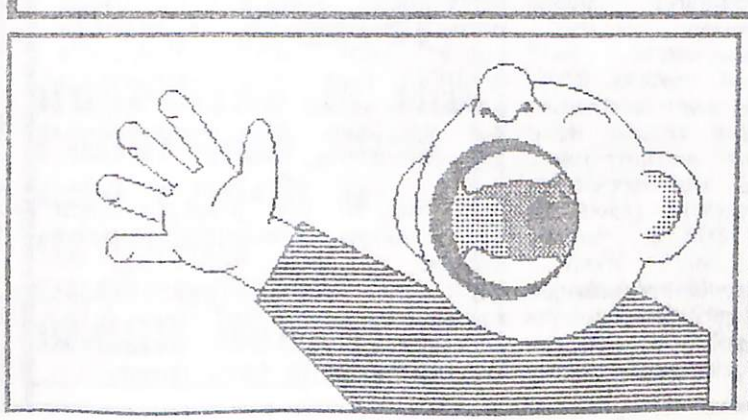
I think most people who have looked at the Amiga would agree that it is one of the most powerful and versatile machines on the market today. Yet there is an ambivalance about it that defies all efforts to categorize it.

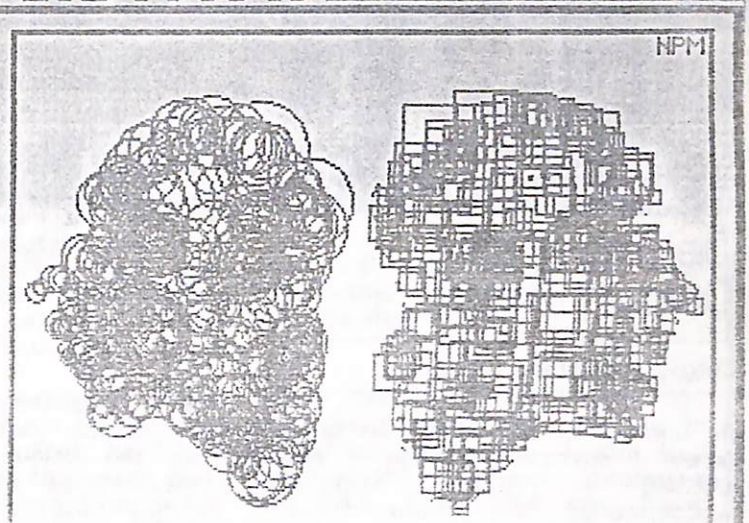
There are some who say, and with good reason, that it is a general purpose machine, and that it should be marketed as such. They point to the power of the 68000 microprocessor, the ability to expand, and to the burgeoning software market, and conclude that there is no environment the Amiga is not capable of fitting into, and fitting in well at that.

Others have a different perspective. They say that the Amiga needs to be marketed to "niches" and "vertical markets". Almost invariably, when you ask the question, "What niches", the answer will turn out to be dependent on the person's interests. There seems to be as many niches as there are professions for this machine.

From looking at these two perspectives, one might conclude that the Amiga really is an "everything" machine, and that those who look only at niches are wrong. I don't think this is so, at least not in the marketing area, and here's why...

If I were to throw out the words "desktop publishing", most of you would immediately think of the Mac. Likewise, the words "business machine" conjure up images of an IBM PC or compatible.





These machines are obviously capable of much more than the things we associate them with, yet we don't automatically think of their other uses. They are, in the general perception of the public, "niche" machines.

On the other hand, the Commodore 64, with its distinction of being the most popular computer ever, with more sold than any other single computer, is not generally thought of as a niche machine, except by those that consider it a "game machine". The 64 was marketed as a low cost "everything machine", and was effectively thrown out onto the market and left to its own devices as regards software and direction.

Just what is the difference here? Well, the IBM and clones are pretty basic computers, requiring extra hardware or optional equipment to do anything but the most mundane of tasks. The Mac is a little better off in this regard, though it was crippled by executive order before it ever got out the door. Still, it is a machine that does a few classes of tasks very well, and requires additional equipment to do more.

The Amiga is much like the 64 or Atari series in this way, in that they have the capability of doing a lot right out of the box, and even more so as software matures. The general appeal of machines like these is that they are both versatile and fun, and that helps people to justify a purchase. This is especially true in the "niche" markets themselves. A video studio is far more likely to buy a machine that will not only do the primary job well, but can be used for other purposes effectivley too.

Niche markets are important, but enough niches add up to an "everything machine". So, how would YOU market it? Sell it to specialized markets and hope it catches on generally? Sell it generally and hope it picks up the specialty markets?

The third way of looking at it is mine. The Amiga is just too good a machine for it to matter. The niches will be filled, the machine will sell. View

For Your info

Deluxe Paint Colour Keys

Nick Murphy

If you've loaded a hi-res grey scale digitized image into DELUXE PAINT you've encountered the menu colour problem. The digitized image uses 16 greys between black at colour 0 and white at colour 15, and since hires can show only 16 colours, all 16 are used in the image. The problem is that the menus are displayed in colours 0 and 1, and since their intensities are so close, it's next to impossible to see what you are doing. You can use the palette to change these colours so you see the menu but DPAINT's palette won't allow you to reset these colours to an unreadable state.

Fortunately, DELUXE PAINT has undocumented key commands which DO allow this. The number keys 1,2,4,5,7, and 8 change the colour register of the current drawing colour like so:-

1=less blue	2=more blue
4=less green	5=more green
7=less red	8=more red

1 value for each keypress in modulo fashion, Ie. if you hit the 8 key when the current palette has maximum red content it will then have NO red content and vice versa). Perhaps the reason that these keys are undocumented is that while red works as described, green and blue both have extra effects that confuse things a little.

What's happening is that the keys simply add or subtract from the colour register as a whole. Since each register is 16 bits wide with 4 bits each for R, G, and B, and the top four bits unused like so:-

```
unused  R    G    B
#### #### #### ####
```

these keys actually have the following effects:-

1= -1 from register
2= +1 to register
4= -16 from register
5= +16 to register
7= -256 from register
8= +256 to register

So, adding or subtracting from the register's blue part can add or subtract to the green part every 16th keypress and add or subtract to the red part every 256th keypress. Similarly, the green can affect the red content of the register every 16th keypress.

This doesn't sound like much of an inconvenience until you realize that it doesn't necessarily take 16 or 256 presses to have the effect! If the register is currently set to pure 100% blue:-

```
???? 0000 0000 1111
```

Then you can see that pressing the 2 key will add 1 to the register and the color changes to almost black:-

```
+    0000 0000 0001
=???? 0000 0001 0000
```

That's almost the way it should be, but what if you hit 4 instead (less green):-

```
=???? 0000 0000 1111
-     0000 0001 0000
????  ?111 1111 1111
```

Suddenly your colour is white or close to it! The reason for the question mark in bit 11 of the result is that I suspect the actual result depends on the contents of the four unused bits. I haven't had time to play with this yet.

While as you can see this not perfect, it can still be used to reset registers 0 and 1 to an illegible state. If you are dealing with a digitized gray scale picture, you can set colour 0 to true red and when you have finished with the menus, hit the 8 key while colour 0 is the current drawing colour and it will change to black, then hit 7 to change it to red again. You can toggle between readable menus and displaying the the picture as it should look, and more importantly SAVING the picture as it should look!

No More Alley Oop!

Msg #1524 BOB LAUGHLIN [7781

I recently needed some work done on my AMIGA (drives) and thought I'd pass my experiences along for those of you that are not familiar with Computerman. They are a sponsor on CityLink (enter Commodore at any prompt for info). I found their work first rate and reasonably priced.

I was getting strange intermittant write errors to disk and problems copying from one drive to another. Went back to my original workbench, still there. Tried another AMIGA, not there. Oh, oh.

According to Ken at Computerman, the drives' alignments, speed etc. were close to specs. After readjustments, cleaning and lubrication however, the problems disappeared. In addition the drives run a bit quieter. The nicest part is that they SOUND healthy now. No more Alley Oop soundtrack when the NEC is looking for those includes.

Apparently there isn't much available for trouble-shooting other hardware problems on the AMIGA, too soon I guess (whoops there goes another motherboard...) but I would assume Computerman would get diagnostics as soon as anybody. It was nice to get a look inside (never would have myself) don't even own any of those funny screwdrivers. I heard a rumor that only developer's AMIGA's had the designer's names pressed into the cover. Hell my dog isn't registered, but there they were.

Also two of the graphics chips had a single yellow dot of paint dabbed on them, obviously by hand, the other (wish I could remember which) had two dots. I'd have sworn I saw 64 colors on the halfbrite test. Hmmm...

2Mb Fast

Msg #1559 WILLIAM HENNING [17]

I was going to post this earlier, but I sorta' forgot.
SPE Engineering
2214 J Street
Bellingham WA 98225
Design/ Prototyping/ Board Work/ Software
Jim Armstrong
phone 206-733-8453
This is the chap doing the cheap memory board for the club. You can also contact Ian on City-Link or at Conti.

...cut off their tails with a...

Msg #1549 CHARLIE GIBBS [86]

Last night I dragged my AMIGA over to a friend's place to show off my latest stuff. We set it up on the living room carpet, which created a problem of what to do with the mouse. My friend went into the kitchen and came back with a plastic carving board, which he placed upside-down on the carpet. It was great! First of all, it's big enough to move the mouse pointer through its full range. Second, it's stiff, so you can put it in your lap if you want to do it that way. Third, it costs no more than that little nylon covered piece of foam neoprene that's too small for anything and won't work except on a hard surface. I'm off to the housewares department of London Drugs. View

This Space For Rent!

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Rumour With A View

Brain Fodder

Msg# 1626 PAUL-ANDRE PANON [582]

Think about this one...
An aquaintance of mine was selling Atari's this summer. Stop that booing and let me finish. It seems that quite often he had to tell people that the place he was working for had run out of stock for 1040ST's. What actually was happening though was that very often the disk drives (and occasionally the computers themselves) being received were faulty and thus most of the stock that was "unavailable" was on it's way back to Atari.

Just to remind everyone that "we're out of stock" does not only mean that the machine is selling like hotcakes. Looks like the quality control problems felt with the C=64 may have moved to Atari with Jack Tramiel. Can anybody say whether the "lack of stock" experienced with the 520ST's earlier were due partly to the same types of problems?

One Meg shoots balls!

John Zimmerman

If you think Atari owners don't like the Amiga vs Atari DVideo Demo, you're right. They have a new game called XTRON which is based on the GALAXIAN arcade game. Instead of monsters coming from the top of the screen, they have the Amiga balls to fire at. One interesting thing men- tioned was that this game re- quires 1MByte of RAM. With .5Meg you give up the music.

Futureware? Fantasyware?

Msg #1545 GREG HUGHES [588]

Recently Gordon (Mr. Commodore) dropped into Supersoftware to show the staff a preliminary version of the sidecar. Perhaps this little goodie has already been seen at one of the Panorama meetings but oh well. He didn't know a whole lot about its technical nature but I can confirm that it does work very well.

This version is designed to work under 1. 1 and does not take over the whole machine. It acts like a separate task and can use multiple windows although only one window can be doing something at a time. "under $1,000 Canadian".

He also mentioned that the C64 emulator is finished and will be available by Christmas. I really didn't expect it so soon considering the state of new releases for the machine.

And for those who want something more hi-tech, he hinted at a new even more dazzling product. It involves Genlock, a video camera, and some great background graphics. It allows YOU, the user to take part in interactive graphics right on the screen. The video image of you becomes part of the graphics scenery in which you can manipulate objects and controls as if you were there. When you do anything your video version mirrors your movements and makes the game come to life.

The most apparent application is in adventure games and real time simulations. This product according to Gordon does exist and some day will be comming to an AMIGA near you... View

CHECK OUT CHESSMASTER

ReView

Msg #1541 PAUL RUITERMAN [36]

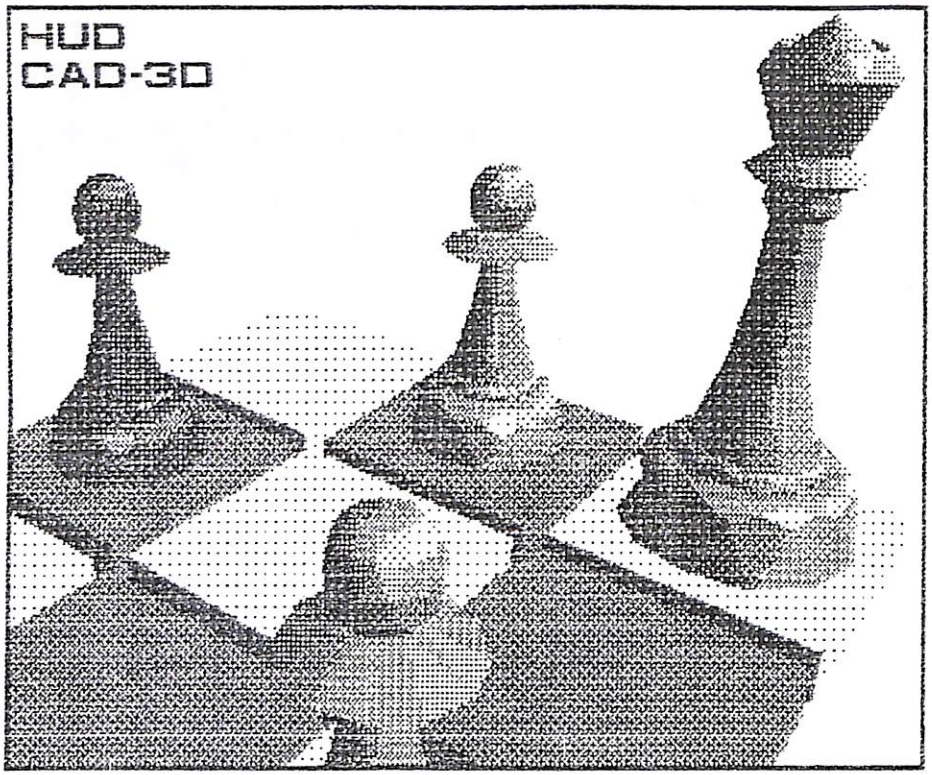
For those with chessmaster 2000. I had a hell of a time beating even level 1 in coffeehouse mode. I had not played since the Fisher-Spasky thing in '72. I found that when I put a real playing board in front of the computer I play better. Somehow or other I just don't see obvious things on a flat screen. I hate the fact that you can't run the game in a multi tasking enviroment. Copy protection of games might be acceptable but not when it interferes with the optimal operation of my machine!! Somebody break this sucker soon. Please.

Push/Pop

Msg #1542 LARRY PHILLIPS [199]

I haven't tried it yet, but you might want to try <left Amiga> N and M to flip back and forth between Chessmaster and a CLI or workbench. Most programs accused of "taking over the machine" really don't, and after people will have forgotten about the keystrokes for pushing/popping the screens.

If you really want a broken version of Chessmaster, I suggest you run (don't walk) to the nearest phone and call Copperstate Business Systems to order their Quicknibble. I don't know the number offhand, but they are in Phoenix AZ. Come to think of it, I don't even know if they will accept Mastercharge or Visa.



Score So Far. . .

Msg #1574 JULIE PETERSEN [51]

Game	Julie	Chessmaster
1	lost (grrr)	won
2	lost (grrrrrr)	won
Set in Best Move Mode Level 1 Easy off, etc.		
3	draw (ha!)	draw
4	clear win (hahahah)	lost
5	won (took back move)	lost
6	draw (rats)	draw
7	bare win (hmmmm)	lost
8	lost (grrrrrrrrrrrr)	won
9	won (just barely)	lost

I like the analysis feature, but haven't been using it because it drives me crazy that the box covers up the middle of the screen. Why didn't they put it at the top so you get a clear view of the board?? I've set myself a goal of 3 consecutive clear wins before moving up to the next level.< I find I don't enjoy coffee house or normal play because of the occasional weird moves.

I've noticed that if you make your moves more quickly, the computer doesn't play quite as well. I guess this means the computer is 'thinking' while you are deciding on your move. Great game. Wish I had more time to play it. Dan has Chess on the Sun terminal where he works and I got to play it on Sunday (and beat it). It has a completely different style of play (interesting). I'd love to pit Chessmaster against it or against itself!

I had forgotten how much I liked Chess till this game came out. Haven't played more than a dozen times since grade 9. I've noticed the graphics files appear to be bit image rather than IFF format. Will look into this further, for those who are interested.

Easy

Msg #1583 GREG GOSS [333]

I think that pre-think is what the "EASY" mode switches in or out. In Easy mode, there is no thinking when it's your move. I, too am frustrated that the additional windows cannot be sized or moved out of the way of the game board. I NEED the removed piece display to think straight, but it's no good if it hides the board.

PAY UP! WIN BIG!

Dave Allen

The Computer Fair Association Swap Meet is on November 16th at Burnaby Central High School. We have about 9 volunteers to man the club's tables for the day. The tables will give outside AMIGA owners a chance to find out about PaNorAmA and join the club.

There will be a DRAW held after the swap meet for some great prises. Anyone joining the club and paying their dues before 2:00 PM on the 16th (with the exception of the Club Executive) will be eligible to win Future Fonts #1 from Classic Concepts, Smart Disk! from Know Technologies (Software) Inc., Grabbit! donated by ComputerMan!! and more so get those dues in!

The Swap Meet will also be a chance to share some of the great Public Domain (PD) software for the AMIGA. In the gymnasium will be a variety of hardware and software for sale from individuals (perhaps unload that Model I in the closet!) and new products from computer stores in and around the lower mainland.

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And thanks...

In every computer user group there is always at least one special person who makes a very significant contribution. The PaNorAmA group is no exception. As a matter of fact our computer user group has been blessed with a number of very hard working individuals who give, and have given, their time and energy for one main reason; to see individuals sharing information about the Amiga in a free and enjoyable manner. After all, we are dealing with the most powerful personal computer ever manufactured, why shouldn't we want to help others grasp the joys of multitasking.

First things first means thanks to JULIE PETERSEN for having the foresight to start this group. Her tireless energy was a catalyst for the others who met at General Cybernetics in those early days.

Our second recipient of the Special People award goes to BRIAN NIESSEN, or Bri as he is known to his friends. As the first Club librarian Bri has created the club library to date. Many hours of downloading off the major networks and collecting disks from distributors and retailers is certainly appreciated by the club members. Congratulations on your recent marriage!

This month's SPECIAL THANKS goes out to BRENT BROWN. Brent is the reason we are using the great facilities at BCIT. Brent spends many hours before and after each club meeting (twice a month) making sure that we have sound, lights, a row of colour monitors on each side of the auditorium and a full triple-beam projection monitor at centre stage. As if that was not enough, Brent is the system operator of Dorean BBS, the unofficial online file area for PaNorAmA. Many thanks Brent!

View

Coming into View. . .

I'll explain how the View is put together, Julie Petersen has promised the premiere of her cartoon strip for the next issue. Regular columns by your regular columnists

- Dave Allen with the President's Outlook
- Larry Phillips with a Guru's Meditations
- Paul Ruiterman with a KickStart

plus ReViews, Bugs, For Your .info and much more, if you contribute to the View!!

I'd like to offer a special thanks to the people at COMPUTERMAN and CONTI who took a chance and advertised in this issue. Without their support this would have been an expensive project. You can show YOUR appreciation by supporting them in turn.

Nick Murphy